

Proposal: GenPride Senior Center: LGBTQ Senior and Housing Services

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Background: This proposal seeks funding for GenPride, a community senior center on Capitol Hill, designed to provide services for at-risk and underserved LGBTQ seniors via a collaboration between Generations Aging with Pride, a Seattle non-profit agency, and the University of Washington's Aging with Pride. The GenPride Center will address the growing aging, health and housing challenges of socially isolated LGBTQ older adults and provide innovative programming for *all* LGBTQ generations and *all* seniors to strengthen the community, building on the engagement and histories of LGBTQ seniors. Seattle has one of the largest LGBTQ populations in the country, representing more than 8% of older adults, and the number is growing rapidly. Yet, still today, LGBTQ seniors remain largely invisible in senior services and housing. Because of the extremely high rates of social isolation among LGBTQ older adults, aging in community - engaged and safe - is critical for LGBTQ older adults. Without specialized senior and housing services and targeted outreach for LGBTQ seniors, there are severe consequences for LGBTQ older adults, their families and communities, including social isolation, premature institutionalization in nursing homes, and homelessness.

Aging in Community: Addressing LGBTQ Inequities in Housing and Services, a report commissioned by the City of Seattle Office of Housing, identified many critical unmet needs within the diverse LGBTQ community, including trans older adults, older adults of color, older bisexuals, and LGBTQ seniors living in poverty. Among LGBTQ seniors, the report documented higher rates of living alone, housing cost burden, and social isolation; elevated rates of disability and poor health; inadequate access to senior services and housing supports; lack of cultural capacity of providers to ensure LGBTQ affirming services; and insufficient advocacy for LGBTQ aging services and housing. LGBTQ seniors also experience heightened risks of discrimination and victimization in senior services and housing, yet most do not report or obtain legal recourse.

Outcomes and deliverables: Based on the gaps in senior and housing services identified in the report, the proposed GenPride Center will offer programming within critical areas, including food and nutrition; health promotion and wellness; education and socialization; social services and case management; and housing supports and resources. The Center will also provide assistance to other providers to ensure culturally informed services for LGBTQ seniors. By serving more than 1,000 seniors and training more than 100 housing providers in a one-year period, the Center will reduce the social isolation and risks facing LGBTQ seniors. The programs will be evidence-based and designed to reduce taxpayer cost by decreasing homelessness and reliance on other systems of care such as hospital emergency room use and premature institutionalization in nursing homes.

The City of Seattle is rapidly falling behind other metropolitan areas in serving LGBTQ older adults. San Francisco, for example, spends more than 6 million dollars addressing the distinct needs of LGBTQ older adults, while Seattle's Aging and Disability Services spends less than \$145,000. Funding this Center and LGBTQ senior and housing services now will result in better and more culturally appropriate services and reduce much greater cost in the future.

Request: Funds to develop GenPride Senior Center on Capitol Hill and LGBTQ-affirming Senior and Housing Services, with single one-point entry, providing nutrition and food services; health promotion and fitness; education and socialization; social services and case management; and housing information, referral, and training. It is critical that the Center and services originate in the LGBTQ community so it is trusted and equipped to reach the most hidden and underserved populations. The Center will provide assistance and training to other aging and housing services to support the delivery of LGBTQ affirming services to this population and address LGBTQ equity and intersectional aging and housing issues for this community.

Funds requested \$249,000.00